

# From Feedback to Action: Growing Rural Support Networks Across Georgia



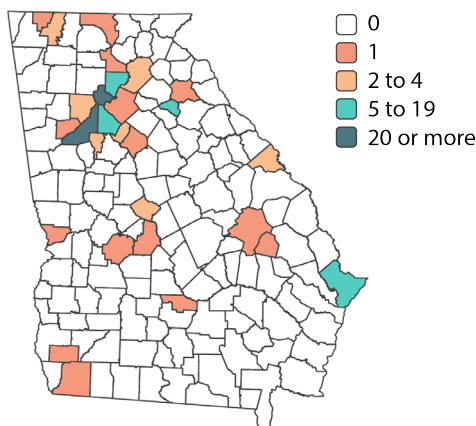
Capstone Project for Georgia 2Gen Academy

*From Feedback to Action* is an initiative by the 2Gen Academy, Georgia Gateway Support Experience Capstone Project Team, as a targeted effort to enhance the Community Support Network within the Georgia Gateway system by translating real-time community insights into tangible system improvements. The project embraces a data-informed, community-driven approach to improve the way Georgians, especially those in rural and underserved areas, access vital public services. The initiative seeks to **identify service gaps, improve user experience, and foster stronger local connections** within the Gateway system.

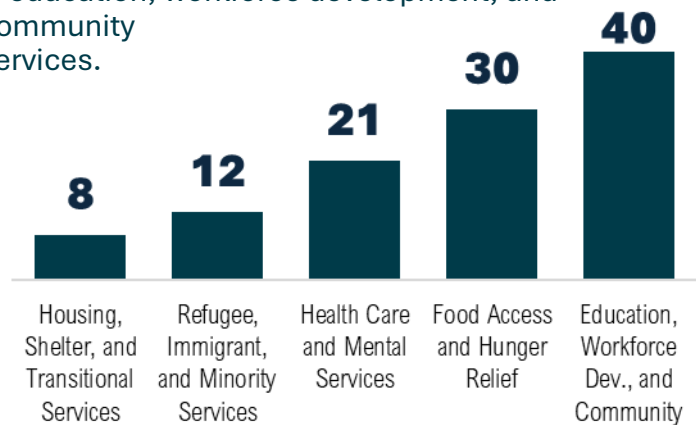
**Georgia Gateway Community Partners** are trusted organizations that work in collaboration with the State of Georgia to help individuals and families access public assistance programs. They assist citizens in navigating the Georgia Gateway system and connect them with essential services such as food assistance, healthcare, childcare, and other critical support resources.

## Georgia has 115 dedicated Community Partners across the state

Only 28 counties have at least one Community Partner.



The most common type of Community Partner is education, workforce development, and community services.



## Community Partner Highlights

### Strong Engagement from Community Partners

Community Partners are actively submitting applications across key public assistance programs (CAPS, SNAP, TANF, WIC, Medicaid), demonstrating a commitment to connecting low-income families with essential supports.

### Collaborative Access Among Staff

For organizations under the same umbrella, Georgia Gateway provides shared access, which streamlines coordination and support among staff members.

### Valued Monthly Partner Meetings

Regular partner meetings provide a helpful forum for questions and feedback, creating a sense of community and shared learning among users.

### Potential for Increased Automation

Stakeholders see clear opportunities to improve efficiency by automating repetitive tasks like reporting and document submission, which could enhance the experience for both staff and families.

Gateway Community partners strengthen access to services like CAPS, SNAP, TANF, WIC, and Medicaid for families – especially in rural and underserved areas.

Community partners provide value to families:

- ✓ Improves Access to Vital Services for the Whole Family
- ✓ Centers Real-Time, Community-Informed Insights
- ✓ Strengthens Local Support Systems for Intergenerational Success
- ✓ Aligns with Georgia’s 2Gen Approach for Economic Mobility and Family Well-Being

**Georgia Gateway  
Community Partners  
Benefit Families,  
Communities,  
and Georgia!**

## Recommendations for Strengthening the Georgia Gateway Community Partner Program



### Enhance Data Tracking and Site-Level Monitoring

- Implement **automated, site-specific data tracking systems** to reduce manual reporting by Community Partners.
- Use this data to identify which individual sites need additional support or ongoing training, improving resource allocation and oversight.

***Impact:** Increases accuracy and timeliness of performance data. Reduces administrative workload for both Community Partners and DHS staff.*



### Implement Phased Staffing Expansion Based on District and Regional Needs

- Adopt a phased staffing model, beginning with additional hires by Georgia DHS’s districts (North, Metro, and South).

***Impact:** Supports expected **doubling of new Community Partner onboarding** within two years in each initial district. Scales support as the network grows by adding additional CPSS staff per region in subsequent years.*



### Shift Program Focus From Recruitment To Development, Support, and Retention

- Reframe the role of DHS staff from recruiters to **community developers and technical liaisons**.

***Impact:** Improves retention of trained and experienced community partners. Creates stronger program consistency, trust, and long-term collaboration with local organizations. Enhances capacity to serve Georgia’s rural and underserved areas with sustainable partner infrastructure.*

**For more information on the Gateway Community Partner program, email [georgiagatewaycp@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:georgiagatewaycp@dhs.ga.gov).**